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Crivelli

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(54) **COMMUNITY GAMING EXPERIENCE**

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A63F 13/00	(2014.01)
G06F 17/00	(2006.01)
G06F 19/00	(2011.01)
G07F 17/32	(2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ***G07F 17/3244*** (2013.01); ***G07F 17/3272*** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC G07F 17/3244; G07F 17/3272
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See application file for complete search history.

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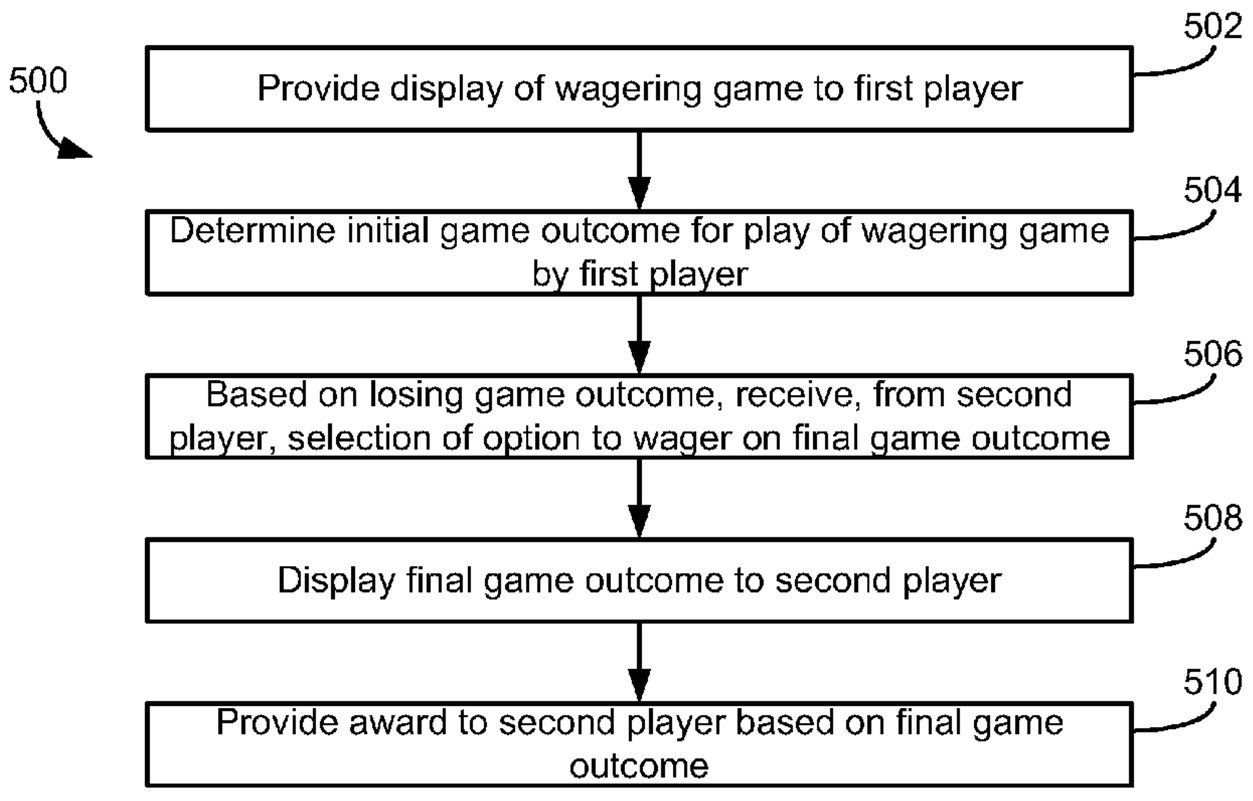
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A gaming environment may provide a user with a community gaming experience by providing, via a first interface at a first gaming machine, a display of a wagering game to a first player; determining an initial game outcome for a play of the wagering game by the first player, wherein the initial game outcome is a losing game outcome; based on the losing game outcome by the first player, receiving, from a second player, a selection of an option to wager on a final game outcome, the final game outcome being based in part on the losing game outcome; displaying, via a second interface at a second gaming machine, the final game outcome to the second player; and providing an award to the second player based on the final game outcome.

20 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



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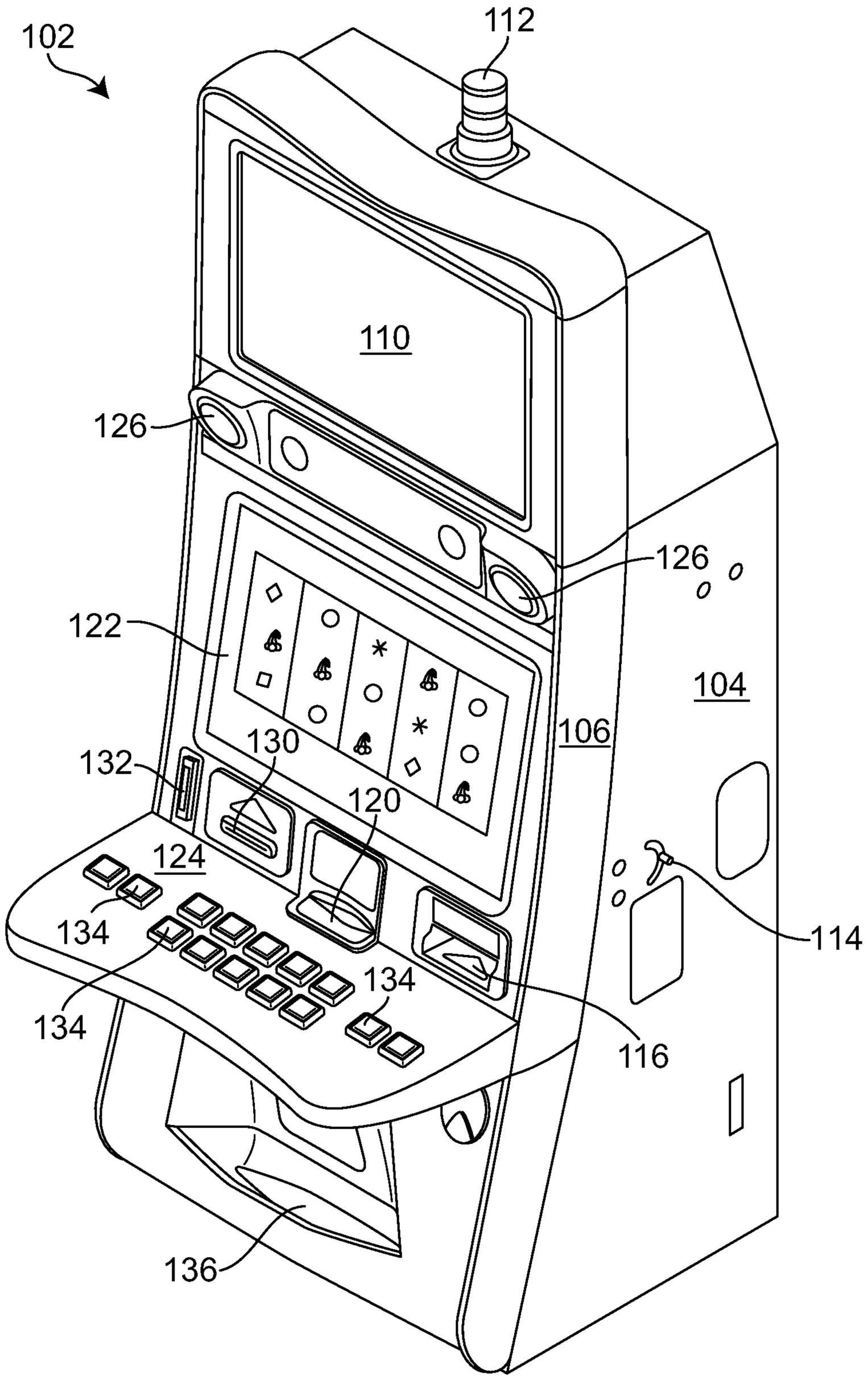
102
112
110
126
126
122
104
106
130
132
120
124
134
134
134
116
114
136

FIG. 1

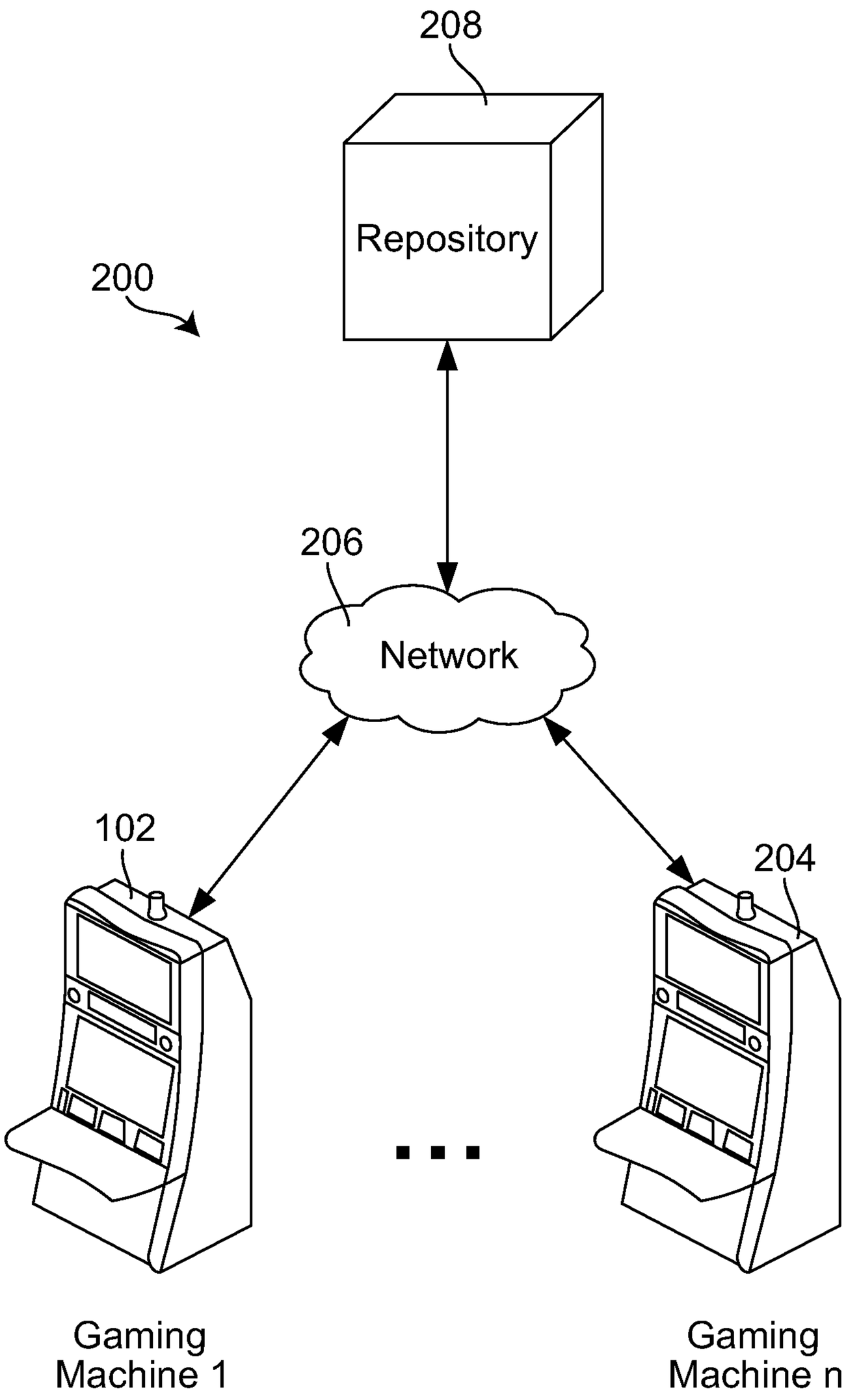
208
Repository
200
206
Network
102
204
Gaming
Machine 1
Gaming
Machine n

FIG. 2

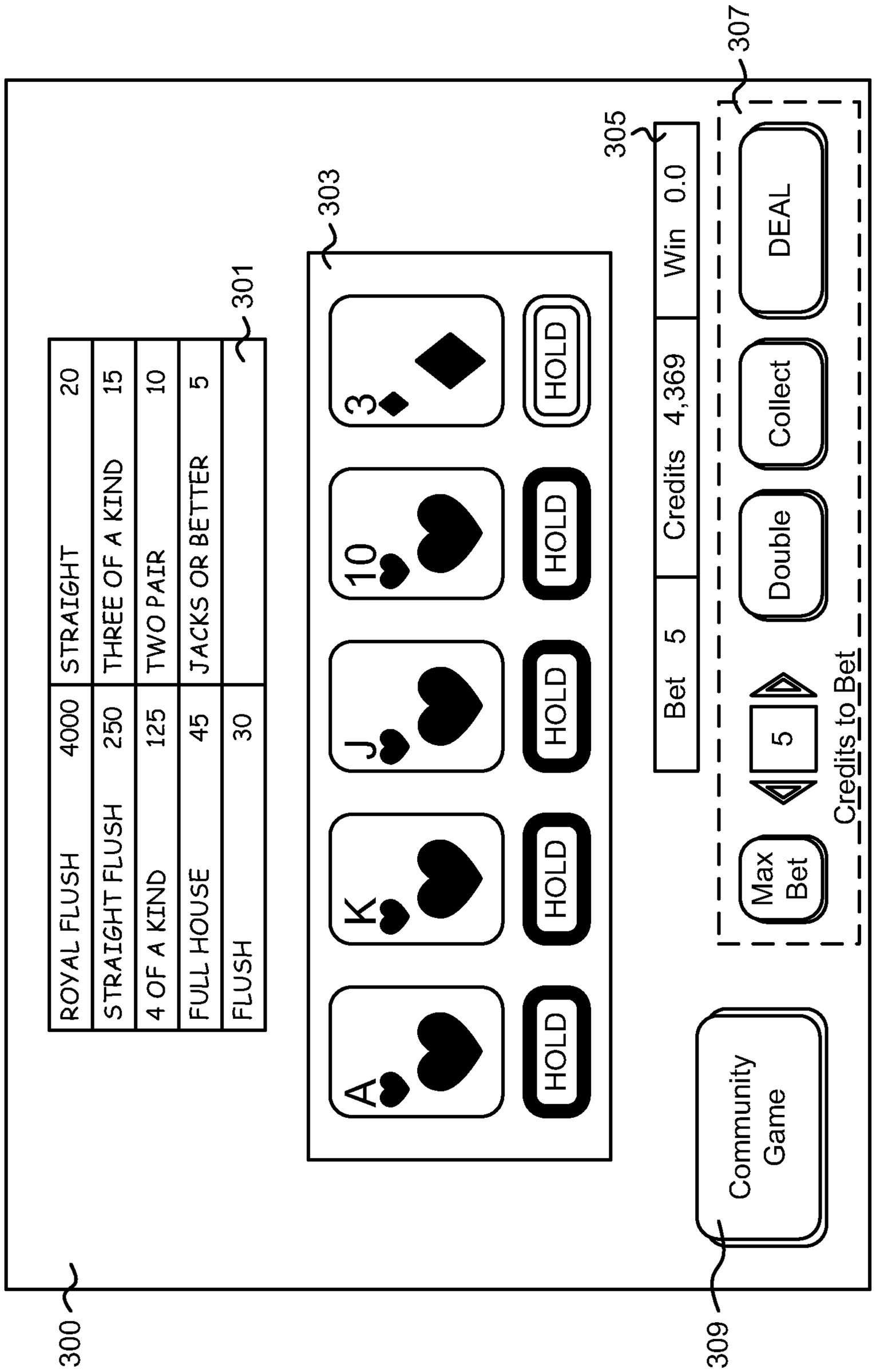
307
305
303
301
Win 0.0
DEAL
ROYAL FLUSH 4000
STRAIGHT FLUSH 250
4 OF A KIND 125
FULL HOUSE 45
FLUSH 30
STRAIGHT 20
THREE OF A KIND 15
TWO PAIR 10
JACKS OR BETTER 5
K
J
10
3
A
HOLD
Bet 5
Credits 4,369
Max Bet
5
Double
Collect
Credits to Bet
Community Game
300
309

FIG. 3A

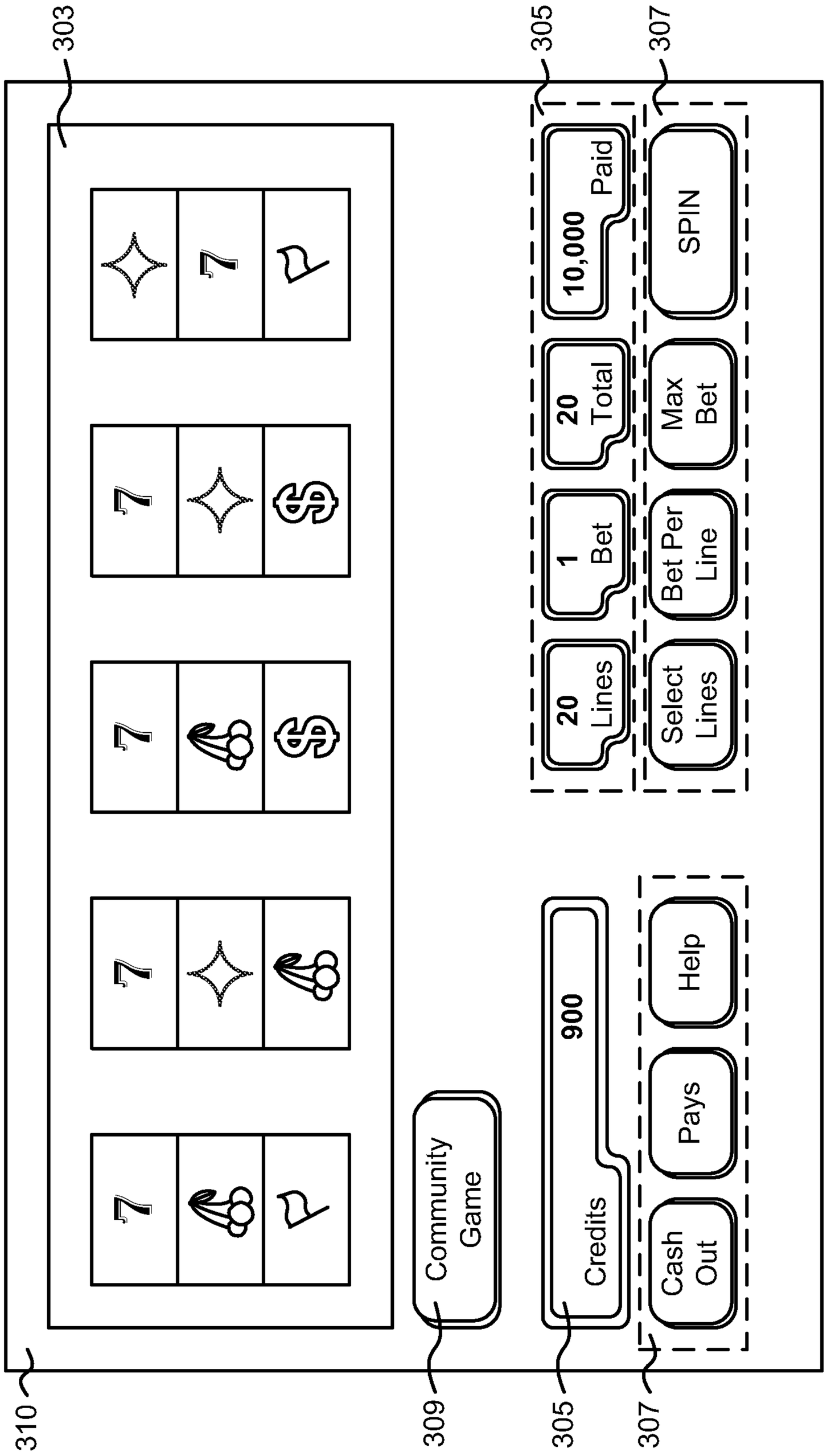
303
305
307
10,000 Paid
SPIN
20 Lines
1 Bet
20 Total
Select Lines
Bet Per Line
Max Bet
900
Help
Community Game
Credits
Cash Out
Pays
310
309
305
307

FIG. 3B

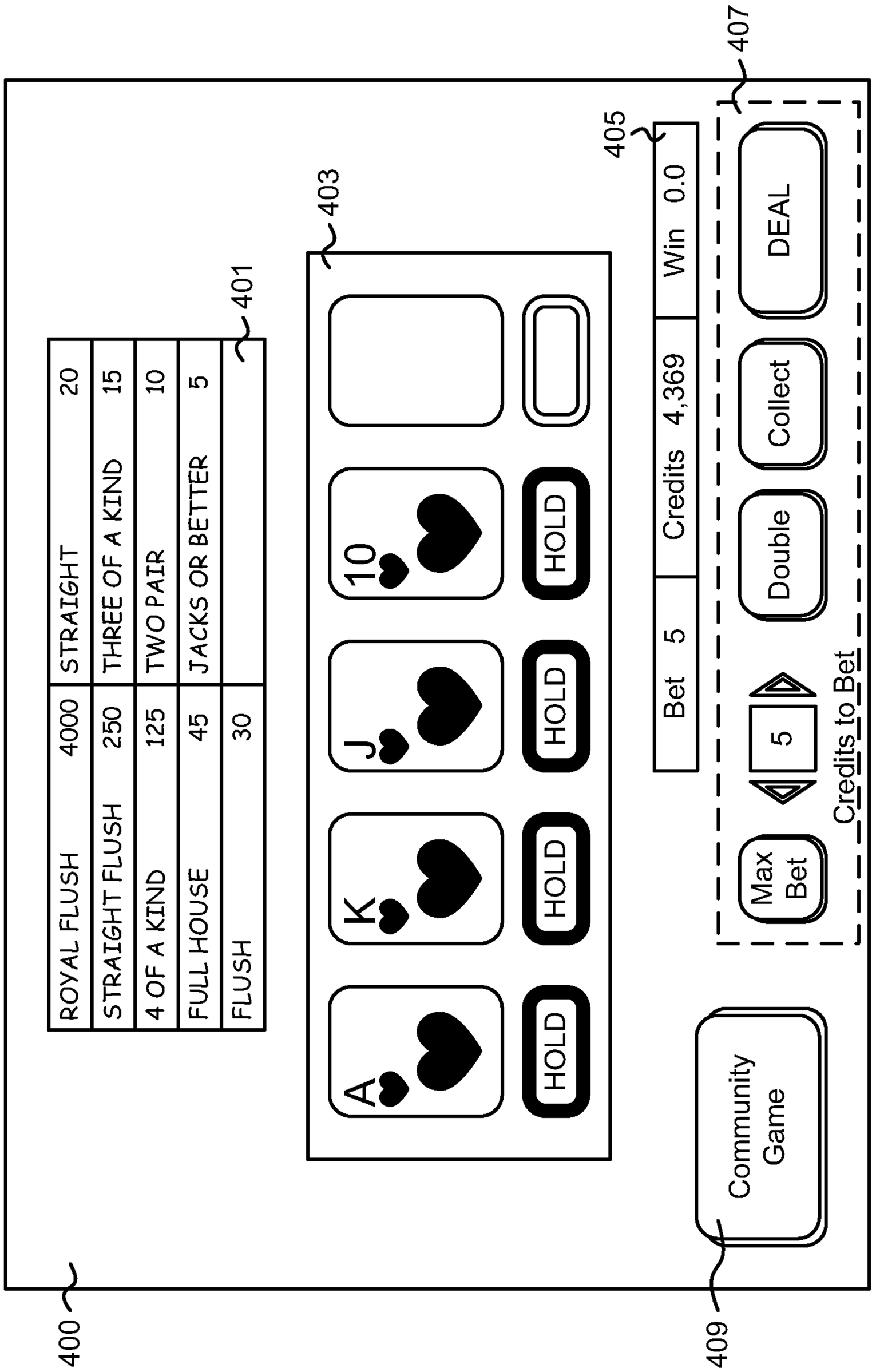
400
401
403
405
407
409
ROYAL FLUSH 4000
STRAIGHT FLUSH 250
4 OF A KIND 125
FULL HOUSE 45
FLUSH 30
STRAIGHT 20
THREE OF A KIND 15
TWO PAIR 10
JACKS OR BETTER 5
HOLD
Win 0.0
DEAL
Bet 5
Credits 4,369
Max Bet
5
Double
Collect
Credits to Bet
Community Game

FIG. 4A

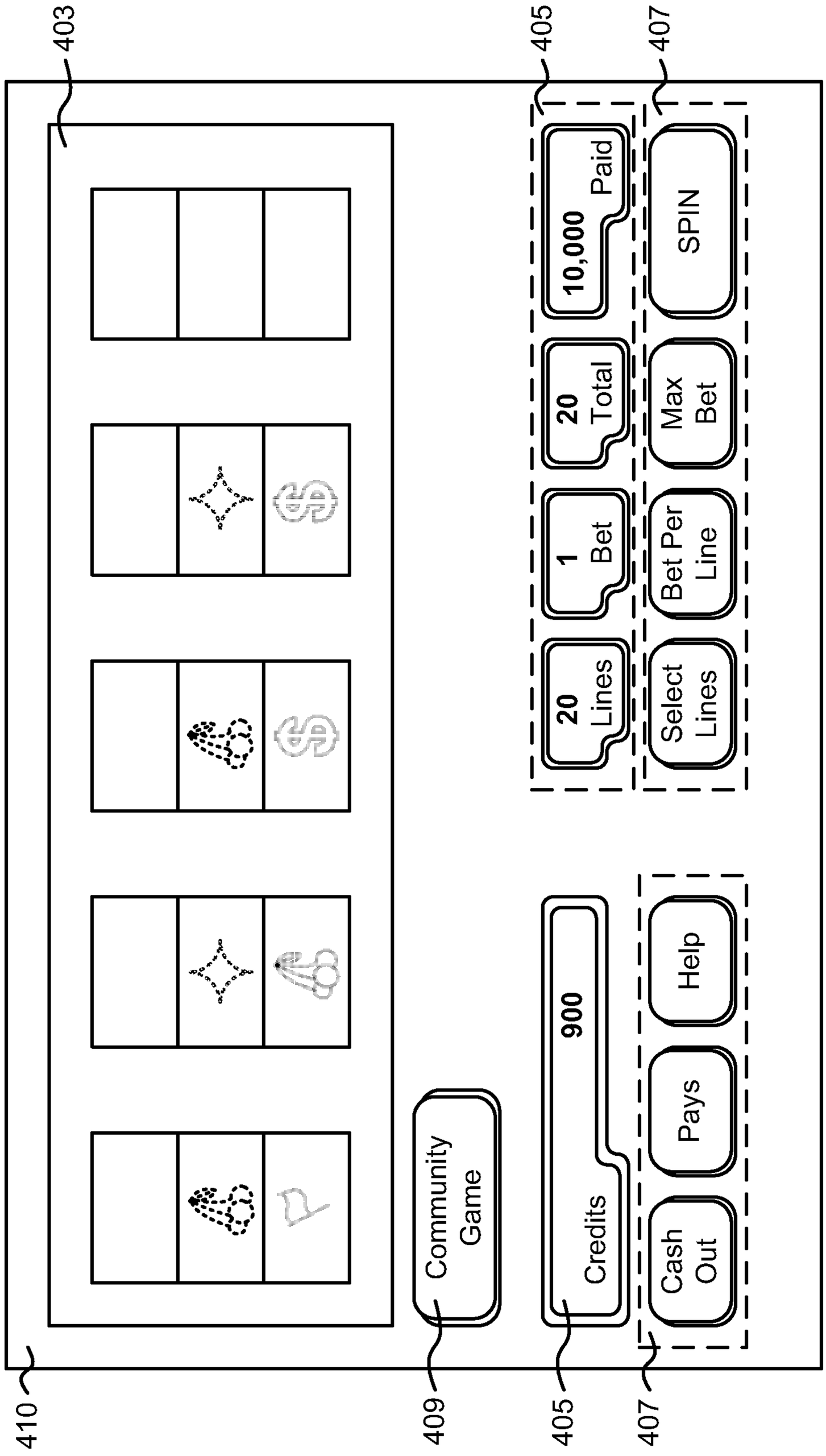
403
405
407
10,000 Paid
SPIN
20 Total
1 Bet
Max Bet
20 Lines
Bet Per Line
Select Lines
900
Help
Community Game
Credits
Pays
Cash Out
410
409
405
407

FIG. 4B

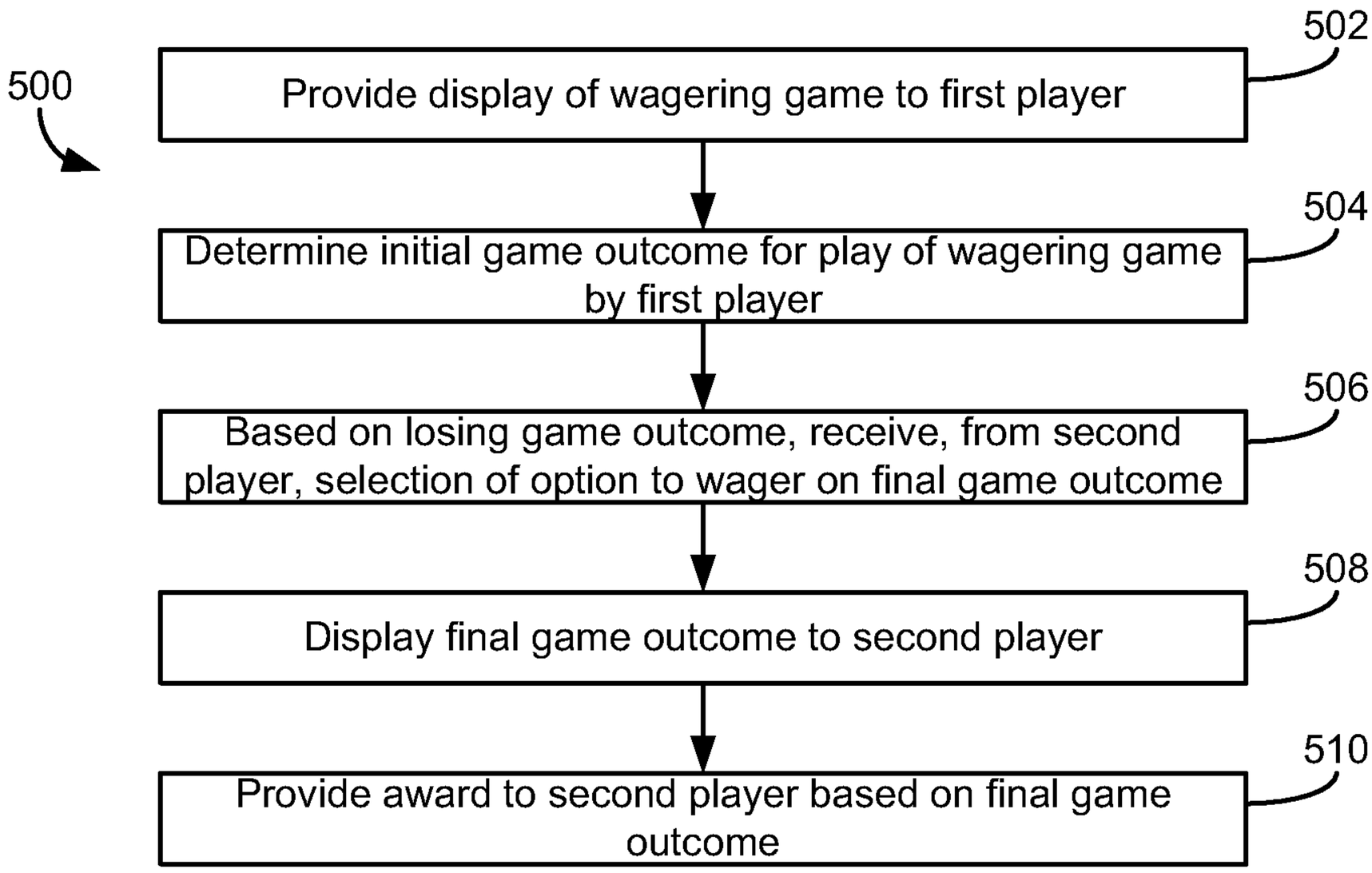
500
Provide display of wagering game to first player
502
Determine initial game outcome for play of wagering game by first player
504
Based on losing game outcome, receive, from second player, selection of option to wager on final game outcome
506
Display final game outcome to second player
508
Provide award to second player based on final game outcome
510

FIG. 5

COMMUNITY GAMING EXPERIENCE

BACKGROUND

Many of today's gaming casinos and other entertainment locations feature different single and multi-player gaming systems such as slot machines and video poker machines. The gaming machines may include a number of hardware and software components to provide a wide variety of game types and game playing capabilities. Exemplary hardware components may include bill validators, coin acceptors, card readers, keypads, buttons, levers, touch screens, coin hoppers, ticket printers, player tracking units and the like. Software components may include, for example, boot and initialization routines, various game play programs and subroutines, credit and payout routines, image and audio generation programs, various component modules and a random or pseudo-random number generator, among others.

Gaming machines are highly regulated to ensure fairness. In many cases, gaming machines may be operable to dispense monetary awards of a large amount of money. Accordingly, access to gaming machines is often carefully controlled. For example, in some jurisdictions, routine maintenance requires that extra personnel (e.g., gaming control personnel) be notified in advance and be in attendance during such maintenance. Additionally, gaming machines may have hardware and software architectures that differ significantly from those of general-purpose computers (PCs), even though both gaming machines and PCs employ microprocessors to control a variety of devices. For example, gaming machines may have more stringent security requirements and fault tolerance requirements. Additionally, gaming machines generally operate in harsher environments as compared with PCs.

In many casinos and other entertainment locations, the gaming machines may be networked to one or more devices that monitor the functions of the gaming machines during operation. For example, a system may monitor and regulate the amount of money received by a gaming machine and the amount of money paid out by the gaming machine. The system may also monitor and regulate multi-player gaming, pooling of player wagers, etc. on the gaming machine. For example, networking and/or control software may be used to regulate game performance across all players, such as graphics that allows each player to participate in the same scene in the game. Networking and/or control software may be used to unify separate gaming machines such that the multi-player gaming may appear as one game to the system. Networking may also allow two or more gaming machines to be combined under the same model, which allows several players to play the same game, while at different gaming machines.

The gaming industry strives to develop and retain the most entertaining games to attract users. For example, a gaming enhancement that attracts increased play includes the concept of a "community" game. The "community" game may be a secondary or bonus game that may be played in conjunction with a "primary" game, such as a side wager. The community game may include any type of game that is similar to the primary game, which is entered into based upon a selected event or outcome in the primary game. The community game may include a progressive jackpot award that is funded by a percentage of coin-in from the gaming machine or a plurality of gaming machines.

SUMMARY

According to various example embodiments, a method for providing a community gaming experience is disclosed. The method may include providing, via a first interface at a first gaming machine, a display of a wagering game to a first player. The method may also include determining an initial game outcome for a play of the wagering game by the first player, wherein the initial game outcome is a losing game outcome. The method may yet further include, based on the losing game outcome by the first player, receiving, from a second player, a selection of an option to wager on a final game outcome, the final game outcome being based in part on the losing game outcome. The method may include displaying, via a second interface at a second gaming machine, the final game outcome to the second player. The method may yet further include providing an award to the second player based on the final game outcome.

According to one example embodiment, a controller is disclosed. The controller includes a processor configured to execute a first and a second interface. The processor may also be configured to provide, via the first interface at a first gaming machine, a display of a wagering game to a first player. The processor may be configured to determine an initial game outcome for a play of the wagering game by the first player, wherein the initial game outcome is a losing game outcome. Based on the losing game outcome by the first player, the processor may be further configured to receive, from a second player, a selection of an option to wager on a final game outcome, the final game outcome being based in part on the losing game outcome. The processor may also be configured to display, via the second interface at a second gaming machine, the final game outcome to the second player. The processor may also be configured to provide an award to the second player based on the final game outcome.

According to another example embodiment, a computer-readable storage medium is disclosed. The storage medium has machine instructions stored therein, the instructions being executable by a processor to cause the processor to perform operations. The operations include providing, via a first interface at a first gaming machine, a display of a wagering game to a first player. The operations may also include determining an initial game outcome for a play of the wagering game by the first player, wherein the initial game outcome is a losing game outcome. The operations may further include, based on the losing game outcome by the first player, receiving, from a second player, a selection of an option to wager on a final game outcome, the final game outcome being based in part on the losing game outcome. The operations may also include displaying, via a second interface at a second gaming machine, the final game outcome to the second player. The operations may include providing an award to the second player based on the final game outcome.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The details of one or more implementations are set forth in the accompanying drawings and the description below. Other features, aspects, and advantages of the disclosure will become apparent from the descriptions, the drawings, and the claims, in which:

FIG. **1** is an illustration of a gaming machine, according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. **2** is an illustration of a gaming environment, according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. **3**A is an illustration of a display of a wagering game to a first player, according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. **3**B is an illustration of a display of a losing game outcome to a second player of the wagering game in FIG. **3**A, according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. **4**A is an illustration of a display of another wagering game to a first player, according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. **4**B is an illustration of a display of a losing game outcome to a second player of the wagering game in FIG. **4**A, according to an exemplary embodiment; and

FIG. **5** is a flow diagram of a method for providing a community gaming experience at a gaming machine.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Numerous specific details may be set forth below to provide a thorough understanding of concepts underlying the described embodiments. It may be apparent, however, to one skilled in the art that the described embodiments may be practiced without some or all of these specific details. In other instances, some process steps have not been described in detail in order to avoid unnecessarily obscuring the underlying concept.

In a primary game, a first player may achieve a near miss for an award on a gaming machine. For example, the first player may receive four out of five "7" symbols on a slot wagering game, four out of five cards toward a royal flush on a poker wagering game, seven out of eight spots on a keno wagering game, etc. When the player achieves the near miss, a second player may be given the opportunity to assist the first player to win the award. For example, the second player may spin a reel, draw a card, draw a ball, etc. to fill in the missing symbol, card, spot, etc.

The second player may receive a portion of the award if the second player's assistance leads to a winning award. The award may be any type of award that provides credit to the first player.

Referring to FIG. **1**, a perspective drawing of an electronic gaming machine **102** is shown in accordance with described embodiments. Gaming machine **102** may include a main cabinet **104**. Main cabinet **104** may provide a secure enclosure that prevents tampering with device components, such as a game controller (not shown) located within the interior of main cabinet **104**. Main cabinet **104** may include an access mechanism, such as a door **106**, which allows the interior of gaming machine **102** to be accessed. Actuation of a door **106** may be controlled by a locking mechanism **114**. In some embodiments, locking mechanism **114**, door **106**, and the interior of main cabinet **104** may be monitored with security sensors of various types to detect whether the interior has been accessed. For instance, a light sensor may be provided within main cabinet **104** to detect a change in light-levels when door **106** is opened and/or an accelerometer may be attached to door **106** to detect when door **106** is opened.

Gaming machine **102** may include any number of user interface devices that convey sensory information to a user and/or receive input from the user. For example, gaming machine **102** may include a first electronic display **110**, a second electronic display **122**, speakers **126**, and/or a candle device **112** to convey information to the user of gaming machine **102**. Gaming machine **102** may also include a console **124** having one or more inputs **134** (e.g., buttons, track pads, etc.) configured to receive input from a user. A controller (not shown) within gaming machine **102** may run a game, such as a wager-based game, in response to receiving input from a user via inputs **134** or displays **110**, **122**. For example, inputs **134** may be operated to place a wager in the game and to run the game. In response, the controller may cause reels shown on display **122** to spin, such as with a slot game, and/or display **110** to display the results of the game.

Gaming machine **102** may also include devices for conducting a wager-based game. For example, gaming machine **102** may include a ticket acceptor **116** and a printer **120**. In various embodiments, gaming machine **102** may be configured to run on credits that may be redeemed for money and/or other forms of prizes. Ticket acceptor **116** may read an inserted ticket having one or more credits usable to play a game on gaming machine **102**. For example, a player of gaming machine **102** may wager one or more credits within a video slot game. If the player loses, the wagered amount may be deducted from the player's remaining balance on gaming machine **102**. However, if the player wins, the player's balance may be increased by the amount won. Any remaining credit balance on gaming machine **102** may be converted into a ticket via printer **120**. For example, a player of gaming machine **102** may cash out of the machine by selecting to print a ticket via printer **120**. The ticket may then be used to play other gaming machines or redeemed for cash and/or prizes. According to various embodiments, gaming machine **102** may record data regarding its receipt and/or disbursement of credits. For example, gaming machine **102** may generate accounting data whenever a result of a wager-based game is determined. In some embodiments, gaming machine **102** may provide accounting data to a remote data collection device, allowing the remote monitoring of gaming machine **102**.

In one embodiment, gaming machine **102** may include a loyalty card acceptor **130**. In general, a loyalty card may be tied to a user's loyalty account. A loyalty account may store various information about the user, such as the user's identity, the user's gaming preferences, the user's gaming habits (e.g., which games the user plays, how long the user plays, etc.), or similar information about the user. A loyalty account may also be used to reward a user for playing gaming machine **102**. For example, a user having a loyalty account may be given a bonus turn on gaming machine **102** or credited loyalty points for playing gaming machine **102**. Such loyalty points may be exchanged for loyalty rewards (e.g., a free meal, a free hotel stay, a free room upgrade, discounts, etc.).

Referring now to FIG. **2**, an illustration of a gaming environment **200** is shown, according to an exemplary embodiment. Gaming environment **200** may be within, for example, a casino, a racetrack, a hotel, or other entertainment location. As shown, gaming environment **200** may include any number of gaming machines. For example, gaming environment **200** may include gaming machine **102** shown in FIG. **1** through a gaming machine **204** (i.e., a first gaming machine through nth gaming machine). Gaming environment may also include a network **206** through which gaming machines **102**, **204** communicate with a repository **208**. In some embodiments, gaming machines **102**, **204** may also communicate with each other via network **206**.

Network **206** may be any form of communications network that conveys data between gaming machines **102**, **204** and repository **208**. Network **206** may include any number wired or wireless connections. For example, repository **208** may communicate over a wired connection that includes a serial cable, a fiber optic cable, a CAT5 cable, or any other form of wired connection. Similarly, repository **208** may communicate via a wireless connection (e.g., via WiFi, cellular, radio, etc.). Network **206** may also include any number of intermediary networking devices, such as routers, switches, servers, etc.

Repository **208** may be one or more electronic devices connected to network **206** configured to collect data from gaming machines **102**, **204**. For example, repository **208** may be a single computer, a collection of computers, or a data center. Repository **208** may include one or more data storage devices in communication with one or more processors. The data storage devices may store machine instructions that, when executed by the one or more processors, cause the one or more processors to perform the functions described with regard to repository **208**. Generally, repository **208** is configured to receive and store data regarding gaming machines **102**, **204** and to provide the data to a user interface (e.g., a display, a handheld device, etc.). In some cases, repository **208** may perform data analysis on the received data. For example, repository **208** may determine averages, trends, metrics, etc., for one or more of gaming machines **102**, **204**. Data may be sent by gaming machines **102**, **204** to repository **208** in real-time (e.g., whenever a change in credits or cash occurs, whenever another type of system event occurs, etc.), periodically (e.g., every fifteen minutes, every hour, etc.), or in response to a request from repository **208**.

The data received by repository **208** may include operational data. In general, operational data may be any other form of data indicative of the operational state of gaming machines **102**, **204**. For example, operational data may include data indicative of the number of games played on gaming machines **102**, **204**, the types of games played on gaming machines **102**, **204**, errors or alerts generated by gaming machines **102**, **204**, whether gaming machines **102**, **204** are currently in use, etc. Repository **208** may use the received operational data to allow gaming machines **102**, **204** to be monitored. Repository **208** may also provide notifications, if maintenance is required for any of gaming machines **102**, **204**. For example, a notification may be sent to a display (e.g., a display attached to repository **208**, a display of a handheld device operated by a technician, etc.), so that an error may be corrected.

In some embodiments, the data received by repository **208** may include data related to a user's loyalty account. For example, a user of gaming machine **102** may link their loyalty account to gaming machine **102**, so that she can gain loyalty points, free turns, etc., while playing gaming machine **102**. A user may link his or her loyalty account to gaming machine **102** in any number of ways. For example, the user may insert a loyalty card into gaming machine **102** and/or provide biometric data to gaming machine **102** (e.g., by conducting a finger print scan, a retinal scan, etc.). In some cases, a mobile device operated by the user may provide data regarding the user's loyalty account to gaming machine **102**. The mobile device may transfer data to gaming machine **102** wirelessly (e.g., via Bluetooth, WiFi, etc.), via a wired connection (e.g., via a USB cable, a docking station, etc.), via the user's body (i.e., the mobile device transmits data through the user's body and into gaming machine **102**), or in another manner. Repository **208** may then associate the user's time playing gaming machine **102** with the user's loyalty account (e.g., to add loyalty points to the user's account, to provide certain rewards to the user, such as a bonus turn, etc.).

Repository **208** may provide data to gaming machines **102**, **204** via network **206**. For example, repository **208** may notify a user of gaming machine **102** that the user qualifies for a loyalty award, such as a free meal, a free night in a hotel, a discount, a bonus turn, and so on. In some cases, repository **208** may provide a service window to gaming machines **102**, **204**. For example, the service window may appear within a Flash application executed by gaming machines **102**, **204** via the lower display of the machines. A service window may allow notifications to be provided by repository **208** to an individual user during game play.

FIGS. **3**A and **3**B are illustrations of a display screen of a wagering game to a first player, in accordance with an exemplary embodiment. The gaming machine may include display screen **300**, **310** for providing the wagering game. Display screen **300**, **310** may be provided on an interface of a gaming machine, a video terminal, kiosk, etc.

In another implementation, display screen **300**, **310** may include a pop-up screen, picture-in-picture (PIP), an overlay, or any appropriate secondary display screen of the first player's wagering game along with a secondary display.

Display screens **300**, **310** may include section **301**, which includes the credits/awards won for various achievements within the game. For example, display screens **300** includes a poker wagering game, thus section **301** relates to the awards received for various card arrangements. Display screen **310** includes a slot wagering game, thus section **301** relates to awards received for various slot arrangements.

Display screen **300** may also include section **305**, which includes statistics for the player. For example, section **305** may include indicators (e.g., tactile, touch screen, overlay, etc.) for the number of wagers that have been placed, how many credits the player has, the percentage of wins, and so forth. Section **305** may include more or less indicators depending on the configuration of the gaming machine.

Display screen **300** may include section **307**, which includes actions that the player can take within the game. For example, section **307** includes indicators (e.g., tactile, touch screen, overlay, etc.) for the maximum wager, the number of credits needed to wager, or whether to double the bet, whether to collect any awards, whether to deal/wager, and so forth. Section **307** may include more or less indicators depending on the configuration of the gaming machine.

Display screen **300** may also include section **303**, which includes the current status of the game to the player. Section **303** displays the player's current card arrangement. As shown in FIG. **3**A, section **303** illustrates the final current card arrangement to the first player. In FIG. **3**B, section **303** illustrates the final slot arrangement to the first player. In FIG. **3**A, the first player has received a hand of four cards in sequence, all of the same suit and one card that is not of the same suit. In FIG. **3**B, the first player has received four 7 symbols on the five reel gaming machine. Thus, the first player has encountered a near-miss situation.

The first player may be presented with the community gaming option interface **309**. Community gaming option interface **309** may include an indicator on the gaming machine, a touch screen input, overlay (pop-up screen), etc. Community gaming option interface **309** may be configured to receive input indicating whether the first player wants to proceed to a community gaming mode to play for the community award. If the first player does not select the community gaming option, then the first player may continue to play at the gaming machine or discontinue play (e.g., cash out). In other implementations, the community gaming mode is entered automatically (without player input) responsive to the near-miss situation in the gaming results. In such implementations, the first player may decline to participate in the community gaming option, e.g., by declining to place a wager.

If the community gaming option mode is entered, then an additional wager may be required. For example, on a quarter video poker machine with a $1.25 maximum wager, an additional quarter may be required to participate in commu-

nity gaming, thereby making the total wager $1.50. For example, on a penny slot machine, an additional penny may be required to participate in the community gaming. In some implementations, the jackpot for community gaming grows increases until a gaming machine receives a near-miss. For example, a percentage of coin-in may be contributed toward a community gaming pot.

If the first player elects to participate in the community gaming award, then the first player may place a wager. The first player may also be notified on display screen **300**, **310** whether a second player participates in the community gaming option. In an example embodiment, each of the players that participate in the community gaming option place a wager of the same amount. For example, the amount of the wager may be an established/default wager amount for participating in the community gaming option. In other embodiments, the players may place wagers of different amounts.

In some implementations, the first player may be designated as "host," while the second player may be designated as "guest" on their respective display screens. The second player display screen is shown in FIGS. **4**A and **4**B.

In FIGS. **4**A and **4**B, the second player has selected via community gaming option interface **409** to play for the community award. FIGS. **4**A and **4**B illustrates a display screen of a second player after the first player has made their selection for the community gaming option.

FIGS. **4**A and **4**B are similar display screens to FIGS. **3**A and **3**B, showing the overlay of the community game. Display screen **400**, **410** may include sections **403**, **405**, and **407**. In alternative implementations, display screen **400**, **410** may include additional or fewer elements, a different game, etc. Display screen **410** may also include community gaming option interface/selector **409**. Community gaming option selector **409** may alert the second player that the first player has requested community play. For example, if community gaming option interface **409** is a selector, it may remain off (dark) until the first player selects community gaming option interface **309** on their display screen **300**, then the selector powers on, flashes, lights up, etc. The second player may select community play.

Display screen **410** illustrates the first player's game (display screen **300**), such as the second player's display screen **410** switches to the first player's display screen **300**. In another implementation, display screen **410** may be a pop-up screen, picture-in-picture (PIP), an overlay, or any appropriate secondary display screen of the first player's wagering game within the second player's wagering game.

In some implementations, the second player may be presented with the first player's combination of cards, symbols, etc. For example, the deck of cards, slot reels, etc. may be different on the second player's gaming machine, but the display screen may include the same initial cards, symbols, etc. as the first player's display screen. In other implementations, the second player may be presented with only some of the losing cards, symbols, etc. In another implementation, the second player may be presented with an empty slot, meaning the second player is not presented with the entire losing combination. For example, in some implementations, the second player is presented with an image of the first player's screen (display screen **300**, **310**) and the reel without the winning symbol to spin, the card that was not part of the combination (such as the fifth card), etc.

For example, when the first player elects community gaming and the second player accepts, then display screen **300**, **310**, **400**, **410** stops, freezes, etc. and switches to a community gaming screen, which may appear as an overlay to the main screen to announce the community game. The community gaming screen may be in a different color, light, etc.

In one example, the four cards (shown in display screen **300**) that the first player held may be displayed to the second player. Display screen **400** shows that the four cards are held. Display screen **400** may display shuffling of 1 of 5, 2 of 5, etc. up to 5 of 5, at which point the card may be picked. The second player may have the option to select the card at any time and at any shuffle by pressing an indicator included in section **407**, "stop" or any appropriate notification to the second user to terminate shuffling and select a card. The shuffling may be performed using a number of methodologies. For example, when the four cards are displayed, then the fifth card is randomly selected, i.e., the shuffling and selection are fake. In another example, when the four cards are displayed, then the fifth card may be selected from a real random shuffle and the second player terminates the random shuffling.

If the second player hits the royal flush, then the screen will display the amount WON at display screen **400**. The number of players participating and the numbers of winners with amounts may also be displayed. If the second player does not hit the royal flush, then display screen **400** may include the number of players participating and the number of winners with the amounts.

Distribution of the award may be displayed to both the first player and the second player when each player accesses community gaming option interface **309**. In some implementations, the award will be distributed to the first player based on their hand, symbols, etc. For example, if the first player received the hand as shown in FIG. **3**A, the first player may receive 50% of the award as a consequence of being the initiator of the community gaming option. Assuming the second player wins the community gaming option, then the additional 50% may be received by the second player. If there are additional players, then the additional 50% may be equally distributed. If the first player is among the players that win the community gaming option, then the first player may be among the additional players to whom the additional 50% is equally distributed. In one implementation, if the first player is the only player to win the community gaming option, then the first player receives 100% of the award. In many games, a progressive jackpot may also be awarded in certain scenarios. If the game is one which includes a progressive jackpot, then the first player may also win the progressive jackpot in addition to winning some or all of the additional 50% of the community gaming award. After the community gaming award is distributed, the community gaming award will be reset to an established minimum. If none of the players receive a winning hand, symbols, etc., then the award increases with as a result of the additional wagers.

The community gaming award may be implemented in a variety of different ways. In one example, the award may begin at $1,000 and may typically get paid around $1,200. In some implementations, a portion of each wager, hand, etc. may be apportioned to the award. For example, if one cent is apportioned to the award, then it would take 2000 wagers, hands, etc. to add $200 to the award. If less is apportioned, then more wagers, hands, etc. may be required.

The community gaming award may be a bonus on top of the main award and any progressive jackpots. For example, a wager may be 25 cents per wager, hand, etc. which may contribute $1,000 for 4000 wagers, hands, etc. played. If the community gaming award is set as a bonus, then 20 cents of the wager may go to the main award, and 5 cents to the

community gaming award. In such case, the main award would be at $1800 (for 4000 wagers) and the community gaming award may include $1200, which may attract more players to play and contribute to the community gaming award. In another example, a portion of each wager may also be allocated to a progressive jackpot.

The hit frequency may also increase the community gaming award. For example, if a royal flush gets hit every 40,000 hands, then ten players will have a frequency of hitting the main award of $1800 every 4,000 hands.

In another example, the 4 reels (shown in display screen **310**) that the first player held may be displayed to the second player. Display screen **410** shows that four of the five reels are held. The second player may have the option to spin the reel at any time.

If the second player receives a winning combination coupled with the four held slot combinations, then the screen will display the amount WON at display screen **410**. The number of players participating and the numbers of winners with amounts may also be displayed. If the second player does not receive a winning combination, then display screen **410** may include the number of players participating and the number of winners with the amounts.

To prevent collusion, cheating, etc. a timer may be implemented, which may be set to allows the quickest player to participate in the community game. The timer may be displayed on each gaming machine, using lights, a countdown, etc.

Referring now to FIG. **5**, a flow diagram of a process **500** for providing a community gaming experience at a gaming machine, according to an exemplary embodiment. Process **500** may be implemented by one or more processors executing machine instructions stored within one or more computer storage devices. For example, process **500** may be implemented by a gaming machine, such as gaming machine **102** shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**.

Process **500** includes providing, via a first interface at a first gaming machine, a display of a wagering game to a first player. The interface may include a text command interface, a graphical user interface, etc. The interface may show representations of various images to the player and may receive input from the user. For example, the interface may include a touch screen display, so that the player may press the images to interact with them on the display. In some implementations, input to the interface may be provided using a trackball, mouse, keyboard, etc.

Process **500** includes determining an initial game outcome for a play of the wagering game by the first player (block **504**). The wagering game may include a slot wagering game, a poker wagering game, a blackjack wagering game, a keno wagering game, a baccarat wagering game, and a bingo wagering game. The play may include a wager. The wager may further include items, awards, credits, etc. The initial game outcome may include the losing game outcome.

Process **500** includes, based on the losing game outcome by the first player, receiving, from a second player, a selection of an option to wager on a final game outcome (block **506**). The final game outcome may be based in part on the losing game outcome. The selection of the option to wager on the final game outcome may include receiving permission from the first player. In some implementations, the second player may place an initial wager to receive the selection of the option to wager on the final game outcome. In other implementations, the first player selects the second player to wager on the final game outcome. In other implementations, the selection of the option to wager on the final game outcome is provided to the second player based on a player profile of the second player. For example, a player loyalty account may permit a second player to wager x amount of times. The selection of the option to wager on the losing game outcome is provided to the second player in the form of an icon, an image, etc. The selection of the option to wager on the final game outcome may be provided to the second player based on an elapsed time from a previous wager. For example, the second play may wait a predetermined amount of time from a first wager on the second player's machine before being able to wager on the first player's losing game outcome.

Process **500** also includes displaying the final game outcome to the second player via a second interface at a second gaming machine (block **508**). Process **500** includes providing an award to the second player based on the final game outcome. An award may also be provided to the first player. The award may be shared between the first and the second player based on each player's respective wager.

Implementations of the subject matter and the operations described in this specification can be implemented in digital electronic circuitry, or in computer software, firmware, or hardware, including the structures disclosed in this specification and their structural equivalents, or in combinations of one or more of them. Implementations of the subject matter described in this specification can be implemented as one or more computer programs, i.e., one or more modules of computer program instructions, encoded on one or more computer storage medium for execution by, or to control the operation of, data processing apparatus. Alternatively or in addition, the program instructions can be encoded on an artificially-generated propagated signal, e.g., a machine-generated electrical, optical, or electromagnetic signal, that is generated to encode information for transmission to suitable receiver apparatus for execution by a data processing apparatus. A computer storage medium can be, or be included in, a computer-readable storage device, a computer-readable storage substrate, a random or serial access memory array or device, or a combination of one or more of them. Moreover, while a computer storage medium is not a propagated signal, a computer storage medium can be a source or destination of computer program instructions encoded in an artificially-generated propagated signal. The computer storage medium can also be, or be included in, one or more separate components or media (e.g., multiple CDs, disks, or other storage devices). Accordingly, the computer storage medium may be tangible and non-transitory.

The operations described in this specification can be implemented as operations performed by a data processing apparatus on data stored on one or more computer-readable storage devices or received from other sources.

The term "client or "server" include all kinds of apparatus, devices, and machines for processing data, including by way of example a programmable processor, a computer, a system on a chip, or multiple ones, or combinations, of the foregoing. The apparatus can include special purpose logic circuitry, e.g., an FPGA (field programmable gate array) or an ASIC (application-specific integrated circuit). The apparatus can also include, in addition to hardware, code that creates an execution environment for the computer program in question, e.g., code that constitutes processor firmware, a protocol stack, a database management system, an operating system, a cross-platform runtime environment, a virtual machine, or a combination of one or more of them. The apparatus and execution environment can realize various different computing model infrastructures, such as web services, distributed computing and grid computing infrastructures.

A computer program (also known as a program, software, software application, script, or code) can be written in any form of programming language, including compiled or interpreted languages, declarative or procedural languages, and it can be deployed in any form, including as a stand-alone program or as a module, component, subroutine, object, or other unit suitable for use in a computing environment. A computer program may, but need not, correspond to a file in a file system. A program can be stored in a portion of a file that holds other programs or data (e.g., one or more scripts stored in a markup language document), in a single file dedicated to the program in question, or in multiple coordinated files (e.g., files that store one or more modules, sub-programs, or portions of code). A computer program can be deployed to be executed on one computer or on multiple computers that are located at one site or distributed across multiple sites and interconnected by a communication network.

The processes and logic flows described in this specification can be performed by one or more programmable processors executing one or more computer programs to perform actions by operating on input data and generating output. The processes and logic flows can also be performed by, and apparatus can also be implemented as, special purpose logic circuitry, e.g., an FPGA (field programmable gate array) or an ASIC (application specific integrated circuit).

Processors suitable for the execution of a computer program include, by way of example, both general and special purpose microprocessors, and any one or more processors of any kind of digital computer. Generally, a processor will receive instructions and data from a read-only memory or a random access memory or both. The essential elements of a computer are a processor for performing actions in accordance with instructions and one or more memory devices for storing instructions and data. Generally, a computer will also include, or be operatively coupled to receive data from or transfer data to, or both, one or more mass storage devices for storing data, e.g., magnetic, magneto-optical disks, or optical disks. However, a computer need not have such devices. Moreover, a computer can be embedded in another device, e.g., a mobile telephone, a personal digital assistant (PDA), a mobile audio or video player, a game console, a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver, or a portable storage device (e.g., a universal serial bus (USB) flash drive), to name just a few. Devices suitable for storing computer program instructions and data include all forms of non-volatile memory, media and memory devices, including by way of example semiconductor memory devices, e.g., EPROM, EEPROM, and flash memory devices; magnetic disks, e.g., internal hard disks or removable disks; magneto-optical disks; and CD-ROM and DVD-ROM disks. The processor and the memory can be supplemented by, or incorporated in, special purpose logic circuitry.

To provide for interaction with a user, implementations of the subject matter described in this specification can be implemented on a computer having a display device, e.g., a CRT (cathode ray tube), LCD (liquid crystal display), OLED (organic light emitting diode), TFT (thin-film transistor), plasma, other flexible configuration, or any other monitor for displaying information to the user and a keyboard, a pointing device, e.g., a mouse, trackball, etc., or a touch screen, touch pad, etc., by which the user can provide input to the computer. Other kinds of devices can be used to provide for interaction with a user as well; for example, feedback provided to the user can be any form of sensory feedback, e.g., visual feedback, auditory feedback, or tactile feedback; and input from the user can be received in any form, including acoustic, speech, or tactile input. In addition, a computer can interact with a user by sending documents to and receiving documents from a device that is used by the user; for example, by sending web pages to a web browser on a user's client device in response to requests received from the web browser.

Implementations of the subject matter described in this specification can be implemented in a computing system that includes a back-end component, e.g., as a data server, or that includes a middleware component, e.g., an application server, or that includes a front-end component, e.g., a client computer having a graphical user interface or a Web browser through which a user can interact with an implementation of the subject matter described in this specification, or any combination of one or more such back-end, middleware, or front-end components. The components of the system can be interconnected by any form or medium of digital data communication, e.g., a communication network. Examples of communication networks include a local area network ("LAN") and a wide area network ("WAN"), an inter-network (e.g., the Internet), and peer-to-peer networks (e.g., ad hoc peer-to-peer networks).

While this specification contains many specific implementation details, these should not be construed as limitations on the scope of any inventions or of what may be claimed, but rather as descriptions of features specific to particular implementations of particular inventions. Certain features that are described in this specification in the context of separate implementations can also be implemented in combination in a single implementation. Conversely, various features that are described in the context of a single implementation can also be implemented in multiple implementations separately or in any suitable subcombination. Moreover, although features may be described above as acting in certain combinations and even initially claimed as such, one or more features from a claimed combination can in some cases be excised from the combination, and the claimed combination may be directed to a subcombination or variation of a subcombination.

Similarly, while operations are depicted in the drawings in a particular order, this should not be understood as requiring that such operations be performed in the particular order shown or in sequential order, or that all illustrated operations be performed, to achieve desirable results. In certain circumstances, multitasking and parallel processing may be advantageous. Moreover, the separation of various system components in the implementations described above should not be understood as requiring such separation in all implementations, and it should be understood that the described program components and systems can generally be integrated together in a single software product or packaged into multiple software products.

Thus, particular implementations of the subject matter have been described. Other implementations are within the scope of the following claims. In some cases, the actions recited in the claims can be performed in a different order and still achieve desirable results. In addition, the processes depicted in the accompanying figures do not necessarily require the particular order shown, or sequential order, to achieve desirable results. In certain implementations, multitasking or parallel processing may be utilized.

What is claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented method configured to provide a community gaming experience, said method comprising:

(a) causing a first interface of a first gaming machine to display a play of a wagering game to a first player;

(b) determining an initial game outcome of the play of the wagering game;

(c) causing the first interface of the first gaming machine to display the determined initial game outcome to the first player; and

(d) if the determined initial game outcome is a losing game outcome, thereafter:

(i) enabling a second, different player at a second, different gaming machine to place a wager on a final game outcome of the play of the wagering game,

(ii) causing a second interface of the second gaming machine to display the final game outcome to the second player, wherein the displayed final game outcome is at least partially based on the displayed initial losing game outcome and the displayed final game outcome includes at least a portion of the displayed initial losing game outcome, and

(iii) providing an award to the second player based on the displayed final game outcome, wherein a credit balance associated with the second player is increasable based on the award, and said credit balance associated with the second player is increasable via an acceptor of a physical item which indicates a monetary value, and decreasable via a cashout device configured to receive an input to cause an initiation of a payout associated with the credit balance.

2. The method of claim **1**, which includes:

providing an award to the first player.

3. The method of claim **1**, which includes

receiving permission from the first player to enable the second player to place the wager on the final outcome.

4. The method of claim **1**, wherein the award is shared between the first player and the second player based on a wager amount placed by each player.

5. The method of claim **1**, wherein the wagering game includes at least one of: a slot wagering game, a poker wagering game, a blackjack wagering game, a keno wagering game, a baccarat wagering game, and a bingo wagering game.

6. The method of claim **1**, which includes enabling the second player to place an initial wager to be enabled to place the wager on the final game outcome.

7. The method of claim **1**, which includes enabling the second player to place the wager on the final outcome based on a player profile of the second player.

8. The method of claim **1**, which includes enabling the second player to place the wager on the final game outcome in association with a selection of an icon.

9. The method of claim **1**, which includes enabling the second player to place the wager on the final game outcome based on an elapsed time from a previous wager.

10. The method of claim **1**, which includes enabling the first player to select the second player to wager on the final game outcome.

11. A gaming system controller comprising:

a processor; and

a memory device which stores a plurality of instructions, which when executed by the processor, cause the processor to:

(a) cause a display to a first player, via a first interface at a first gaming machine, of a play of a wagering game;

(b) determine an initial game outcome for the play of the wagering game;

(c) cause a display to the first player, via the first interface of the first gaming machine, of the determined initial game outcome; and

(d) if the determined initial game outcome is a losing game outcome, thereafter:

(i) enabling a second, different player, via a second interface of a second, different gaming machine, to place a wager on a final game outcome of the play of the wagering game,

(ii) cause a display to the second player, via the second interface of the second gaming machine, the final game outcome, wherein the displayed final game outcome is at least partially based on the initial game outcome and the displayed final game outcome includes at least a portion of the displayed initial game outcome, and

(iii) cause an award based on the final game outcome to be provided to the second player, wherein a credit balance associated with the second player is increasable based on the award, and said credit balance associated with the second player is increasable via an acceptor of a physical item which indicates a monetary value, and decreasable via a cashout device configured to receive an input to cause an initiation of a payout associated with the credit balance.

12. The gaming system controller of claim **11**, wherein when executed by the processor, the plurality of instructions cause the processor to cause an award to be provided to the first player.

13. The gaming system controller of claim **11**, wherein when executed by the processor, the plurality of instructions cause the processor to receive permission from the first player to enable the second player to placed the wager on the final outcome.

14. The gaming system controller of claim **11**, wherein the award is shared between the first player and the second player based on a wager amount placed by each player.

15. The gaming system controller of claim **11**, wherein the wagering game includes at least one of: a slot wagering game, a poker wagering game, a blackjack wagering game, a keno wagering game, a baccarat wagering game, and a bingo wagering game.

16. The gaming system controller of claim **11**, wherein when executed by the processor, the plurality of instructions cause the processor to enable the second player to place an initial wager to be enabled to place the wager on the final game outcome.

17. The gaming system controller of claim **11**, wherein when executed by the processor, the plurality of instructions cause the processor to enable the second player to place the wager on the final game outcome based on a player profile of the second player.

18. The gaming system controller of claim **11**, wherein when executed by the processor, the plurality of instructions cause the processor to enable the second player to place the wager on the final game outcome in association with a selection of an icon.

19. The gaming system controller of claim **11**, wherein when executed by the processor, the plurality of instructions cause the processor to enable the second player to place the wager on the final game outcome based on an elapsed time from a previous wager.

20. A non-transitory computer-readable storage medium having machine instructions stored therein, the instructions being executable by a processor to cause the processor to perform operations comprising:

(a) causing a display to a first player, via a first interface of a first gaming machine, of a play of a wagering game;

(b) determining an initial game outcome for the play of the wagering game;

(c) causing a display to the first player, via the first interface at the first gaming machine, of the determined initial game outcome; and

(d) if the determined initial game outcome is a losing game outcome, thereafter:

(i) enabling a second, different player at a second, different gaming machine to place a wager on a final game outcome of the play of the wagering game,

(ii) causing a display to the second player, via a second interface of the second gaming machine, of the final game outcome, wherein the displayed final game outcome is at least partially based on the displayed initial losing game outcome and the displayed final game outcome includes at least a portion of the displayed initial game outcome, and

(ii) providing an award to the second player based on the displayed final game outcome, wherein a credit balance associated with the second player is increasable based on the award, and said credit balance associated with the second player is increasable via an acceptor of a physical item which indicates a monetary value, and decreasable via a cashout device configured to receive an input to cause an initiation of a payout associated with the credit balance.

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